NUMB. CXXXVI.

# The SPECTATOR.

*——Parthis mendacior——* Hor.

*Monday, August 6.* 1711.

ording to the Requeſt of this ſtrange Fellow, I ſhall Print the following Letter.

*Mr.* SPECTATOR,

Shall without any manner of Preface or Apology acquaint you, that I am, and ever have been from my Youth upward, one of the greateſt Liars this Iſland has produced. I have read all the Moraliſts upon the Subject, but could never find any effect their Diſcourſes had upon me, but only to add to my Misfortune by new Thoughts and Notions, and making me more ready in my Language, and capable of ſometimes mixing ſeeming Truths with my Improbabilities. With this ſtrong Inclination towards Falſhood in this kind, there does not live an honeſter Man, or a ſincerer Friend; for my Imagination runs away with me, and whatever is ſtarted I have ſuch a Scene of Adventures ready in an inſtant before me, that I cannot help uttering them, tho' to my immediate Confuſion I cannot but know I am liable to be detected by the firſt Man I meet.

Upon Occaſion of the mention of the Battel of *Pultowa*, I could not forbear giving an Account of a Kinſman of mine, a young Merchant who was bred at *Moſco*, that had too much Metal to attend Books of Entries and Accounts, when there was ſo active a Scene in the Country where he reſided, and followed the Czar as a Volunteer: This warm Youth, born at the inſtant the thing was ſpoke of, was the Man who unhorſed the Muſcovite General, he was the Occaſion that the Muſcovites kept their Fire in ſo Soldier-like a manner, and brought up thoſe Troops which were covered from the Enemy at the beginning of the Day; beſides this, he had at laſt the good Fortune to be the Man who took Count *Piper*. With all this Fire I knew my Couſin to be the Civileſt Creature in the World. He never made any impertinent ſhow of his Valour, and then he had an excellent Genius for the World in every other kind. I had Letters from him (here I felt in my Pockets) that exactly ſpoke the Czar's Character, which I knew exactly well; and I could not forbear concluding, that I lay with his Imperial Majeſty twice or thrice a Week all the while he lodged at *Deptford*. What is worſe than all this, it is impoſſible to ſpeak to me, but you give me ſome occaſion of coming out with one Lie or other, that has neither Wit, Humour, proſpect of Intereſt, or any other Motive that I can think of in Nature. The other Day, when one was commending an Eminent and Learned Divine, what occaſion in the World had I to ſay, Methinks he would look more Venerable if he were not ſo fair a Man? I remember the Company ſmil'd. I have ſeen the Gentleman ſince, and he is Coal Black. I have Intimations every Day in my Life that no Body believes me, yet I am never the better. I was ſaying ſomething the other Day to an old Friend at *Will*'s Coffee-houſe, and he made me no manner of Anſwer; but told me, that an Acquaintance of *Tully* the Orator having two or three times together ſaid to him, without receiving any Anſwer, That upon his Honour he was but that very Month forty Years of Age; *Tully* anſwer'd, Surely you think me the moſt incredulous Man in the World, if I don't believe what you have told me every Day this ten Years. The Miſchief of it is, I find my ſelf wonderfully inclin'd to have been preſent at every Occurrence that is ſpoken of before me; this has led me into many Inconveniencies, but indeed they have been the fewer, becauſe I am no ill-natur'd Man, and never ſpeak things to any Man's Diſadvantage. I never directly defame, but I do what is as bad in the Conſequence, for I have often made a Man ſay ſuch and ſuch a lively Expreſſion, who was born a mere Elder Brother. When one has ſaid in my hearing, Such a one is no wiſer than he ſhould be, I immediately have reply'd, Now 'faith I can't ſee that, he ſaid a very good thing to my Lord ſuch a one upon ſuch an occaſion, and the like. Such an honeſt Dolt as this has been watch'd in every Expreſſion he utter'd, upon my Recommendation of him, and conſequently been ſubject to the more Ridicule. I once endeavour'd to Cure my ſelf of this impertinent Quality, and reſolv'd to hold my Tongue for ſeven Days together; I did ſo, but then I had ſo many Winks and unneceſſary Diſtortions of my Face upon what any body elſe ſaid, that I found I only forbore the Expreſſion, and

the

'that I ſtill lied in my Heart to every Man I met 'with. You are to know one thing (which I be-'lieve you'll ſay is a Pity, conſidering the uſe I 'ſhould have made of it) I never Travell'd in my 'Life; but I do not know whether I could have 'ſpoken of any Foreign Country with more fami-'liarity than I do at preſent, in Company who are 'Strangers to me. I have curſed the Inns in 'Germany; commended the Brothels at *Venice*; 'the Freedom of Converſation in *France*; and 'tho' I never was out of this dear Town, and fifty 'Miles about it, have been three Nights together 'dogged by Bravo's for an Intreague with a Cardi-'nal's Miſtreſs at *Rome*.

'It were endleſs to give you Particulars of this 'kind, but I can aſſure you, *Mr.* SPECTA-'TOR, there are about Twenty or Thirty of us in 'this Town, I mean by this Town the Cities of 'London and *Weſtminſter*, I ſay there are in Town 'a ſufficient Number of us to make a So-'ciety among our ſelves; and ſince we cannot be 'believed any longer, I beg of you to print this my 'Letter, that we may meet together, and be under 'ſuch Regulation as there may be no Occaſion for 'Belief or Confidence among us. If you think fit 'we might be called *The Hiſtorians*, for *Liar* is be-'come a very harſh Word. And that a Member of 'the Society may not hereafter be ill received by 'the reſt of the World, I deſire you would explain 'a little this ſort of Men, and not let us *Hiſtorians* 'be ranked, as we are in the Imaginations of or-'dinary People, among common Liars, Make-'bates, Impoſtors and Incendiaries. For your in-'ſtruction herein, you are to know that an *Hiſtori-'an*, in Converſation, is only a Perſon of ſo preg-'nant a Fancy that he cannot be contented with 'ordinary Occurrences. I know a Man of Quali-'ty of our Order, who is of the wrong ſide of 'Forty three, and has been of that Age, according 'to *Tully*'s Jeſt, for ſome Years ſince, whoſe Vein 'is upon the Romantick. Give him the leaſt Oc-'caſion, and he will tell you ſomething ſo very 'particular that happened in ſuch a Year and in 'ſuch Company, where by the by was preſent ſuch 'a one, who was afterwards made ſuch a thing. 'Out of all theſe Circumſtances, in the beſt Language 'in the World, he will join together with ſuch pro-'bable Incidents an Account that ſhows a Perſon of 'the deepeſt Penetration, the honeſteſt Mind, and 'withal ſomething ſo Humble when he ſpeaks of 'himſelf that you would Admire. Dear Sir, why 'ſhould this be Lying? There is nothing ſo inſtru-'ctive. He has withal the graveſt Aſpect; ſome-'thing ſo very venerable and great! Another of 'theſe Hiſtorians is a Young Man whom we would 'take in, tho' he extreamly wants Parts, as People 'ſend Children before they can learn any thing to 'School, to keep them out of Harm's way. He 'tells Things which have nothing at all in them, 'and can neither pleaſe or diſpleaſe, but merely take 'up your Time to no manner of Purpoſe, no man-'ner of Delight; but he is Good-natured, and does 'it becauſe he loves to be ſaying ſomething to you, 'and entertain you.

'I could name you a Soldier that has done ve-'ry great things without Slaughter; he is prodigi-'ouſly dull and ſlow of Head, but what he can ſay 'is for ever falſe, ſo that we muſt have him.

'Give me leave to tell you of one more who 'a Lover, he is the moſt afflicted Creature in 'World leaſt what happened between him and 'Great Beauty ſhould ever be known. Yet a-'he comforts himſelf. *Hang the Jade her Wo-'If Mony can keep Slut truſty I will do it, the-'mortgage every Acre*; Anthony *and* Cleopatra 'that: *All for Love, and the World well loſt*—

'Then, Sir, there is my little Merchant, 'neſt *Indigo* of the *Change*, there's my Man 'Loſs and Gain, there's Tare and Tret, the 'lying all round the Globe; he has ſuch a proſ-'ous Intelligence he knows all the *French* are 'ing, and what we intend or ought to intend, 'has it from ſuch hands. But alas whither a-'running! While I complain, while I remonſ-'to you, even all this is a Lie, and there is 'one ſuch Perſon of Quality, Lover, Soldier 'Merchant as I have now deſcribed in the wi-'World that I know of. But I will catch 'ſelf once in my Life, and in ſpite of Nature ſp-'one Truth, to wit, that I am

*Your Humble Servant*, &c.

## *ADVERTISEMENTS.*


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*LONDON*: Printed for *Sam. Buckley*, at the *Dolphin* in *Little-Britain*; and Sold by *A. Baldwin* in *Warwick-Lane*; where Advertiſements are taken in, as alſo by *Charles L[illegible]* in the *Strand*.